

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 NSCE-00 SS-15 HEW-04
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 INRE-00
ICAE-00 SSO-00 /065 W
-----020782 212227Z /13

O 212037Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6622

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 5645

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: POSSIBLE IAHRV VISIT TO ARGENTINA

1. GENERAL VIOLA, PRESIDENT VIDELA'S ALTER EGO, IS
NORMALLY MY CONTACT WITH THE EXECUTIVE. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE
ON A WEEK'S VACATION, VIOLA STATED GENERAL REYNALDO BIGNONE,
ARMY SECY GENERAL, WOULD BE CONTACTING ME TO UPDATE ME ON GOA
PROGRESS TOWARD AN INVITATION TO IAHRV TO VISIT ARGENTINA.

2. GENERAL BIGNONE ASKED ME YESTERDAY (THURSDAY, JULY 20)
TO CONFER WITH HIM AT HIS OFFICE LOCATED AT THE ARMY
GENERAL COMMAND AT 1700 HOURS. WE MET ALONE. THIS BEING
THE FIRST TIME WE HAD CONFERRED, BIGNONE APPEARED
UNEASY, ANXIOUS BUT YET COURTEOUS. HE STARTED OUT BY
SAYING THE THOUGHT OF HAVING AN OUTSIDE AGENCY FROM A
FOREIGN AGENCY VISIT AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN
COUNTRY FOR INVESTIGATION PURPOSES IS SOMEWHAT REPUGNANT
TO HIM, REFERRING TO A POSSIBLE VISIT BY IAHRV. HE
CONTINUED SAYING THAT NO PATRIOTIC ARGENTINE CAN ACCEPT
FACT OF USG QUESTIONING GOA'S MOTIVES IN THE FIELD OF
HUMAN RIGHTS. BIGNONE RAISED HIS VOICE WHEN HE STATED
ARGENTINA AND US PURSUE SAME IDEALS AND HAVE IDENTICAL
IDEOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES. IN A DRAMATIC FASHION, HE
LOWERED HIS VOICE AND SAID "ALL OF ARGENTINA IS HURT AND
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CONFUSED BY LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF USG."

3. GENERAL BIGNONE RECOGNIZED HE HAD GOTTEN EMOTIONAL
AND APOLOGIZED. IN AN EFFORT TO SOOTHE HIM, I TOLD
BIGNONE I APPRECIATED HIS FEELINGS BUT THE TRUE TEST
SHOULD BE WHETHER AN IAHRV VISIT WOULD BE IN THE BEST
INTEREST OF ARGENTINA. HE AGREED IT WAS TIME TO CAST

BLIND NATIONALISM AND EMOTIONALISM ASIDE. HE STATED A VISIT FROM IAHCRC WOULD BE POSITIVE.

4. IAHCRC'S INTERROGATORY TO THE GOA'S INVITATION WAS THE NEXT SUBJECT. THERE WERE A TOTAL OF SEVEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY IAHCRC TO GOA. THESE QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THIS EMBASSY IN STATE 163504 WERE GIVEN TO GENERAL VIOLA FOR HIS PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION. BIGNONE SAID HE HAD REVIEWED THESE QUESTIONS WITH VIDELA. HE THEN GAVE ME TENTATIVE ANSWERS TO EACH QUESTION. WE REVIEWED THEM ONE BY ONE. HE THEN AGREED TO FURNISH ME WITH A COPY OF THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY, I SHALL NOT REPEAT THE QUESTIONS HERE BUT ONLY SUBMIT ANSWERS TO ISSUES RAISED IN STATE 163504. ANSWERS FOLLOW: (A) YES; (B) IT IS SUGGESTED THIS QUESTION BE DELETED AS IT IS OFFENSIVE TO GOA; (C) YES; (D) CLARIFY WHAT IS MEANT BY: "OTHER DETENTION AND INTERROGATION SITES?" WITH REFERENCE TO "INTERVIEW PRIVATELY" IT IS CONSIDERED IT SHOULD BE IN THE PRESENCE OF WITNESSES. (E) CLARIFICATION IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF QUESTION. (F) YES; (G) COMMENT: NEITHER BIGNONE NOR EMBASSY HAS COPY OF RESOLUTION CONTAINING LETTERS D? H AND I, THEREFORE, UNABLE TO GIVE ANSWER.

5. INFORMATION IN PARA FOUR IS OUR TRANSLATION OF GOA RESPONSES. SINCE THERE ARE NUANCES IN THE SPANISH VERSION IMPORTANT TO NEGOTIATING AN ACCEPTABLE INVITATION
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TO THE IAHCRC, THE FOLLOWING IS THE GOA SPANISH TEXT OF THE IAHCRC QUESTIONS, FOLLOWED BY THE PROPOSED GOA RESPONSE, IN SPANISH.

1. ¿PODRIA LA COMISION ESPECIAL DESIGNADA PARA ATENDER ESTA INVITACION, O CUALQUIERA DE SUS MIEMBROS, ENTREVISTAR LIBRE Y PRIVADAMENTE A PERSONS, GRUPOS, ENTIDADES E INSTITUCIONES?

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 NSCE-00 SS-15 HEW-04 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 INRE-00 ICAE-00
SSO-00 /052 W

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O 212037Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6623

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 5645

2. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO ARGENTINO A OTORGAR LAS GARANTIAS PERTINENTES A TODOS LOS QUE SUMINISTREN INFORMACION, TESTIMONIOS O PRUEBAS DE CUALQUIER CARACTER?

SE SUGIERE SUPRIMIR ESTA PREGUNTA POR SER LESIVA AL GOBIERNO ARGENTINO.

3. ¿PODRIAN LOS MIEMBROS DE LA COMISION ESPECIAL VIAJAR LIBREMENTE POR TODO EL TERRITORIO DEL PAIS CONTANDO PARA ELLO CON LA DOCUMENTACION OFICIAL DEL GOBIERNO QUE LOS IDENTIFIQUE?

SI.

4. ¿PODRIAN TENER LOS MIEMBROS DE LA COMISION ESPECIAL ACCESO A LAS CARCELES Y TODOS LOS OTROS SITIOS DE DETENCION E INTERROGATORIO Y PODRIAN ENTREVISTAR PRIVADAMENTE A LAS PERSONAS RECLUIDAS O DE TENIDAS. ACLARAR QUE QUIEREN SIGNIFICAR POR: "OTROS SITIOS DE DETENCION E INTERROGACION."

EN CUANTO A "ENTREVISTAR PRIVADAMENTE" SE CONSIDERA QUE DEBE SER CON TESTIGOS.

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5. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO A PROPORCIONAR A LA COMISION ESPECIAL CUALQUIER DOCUMENTO O INFORMACION RELACIONADA CON LA OBSERVANCIA DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS QUE ESTA CONSIDERE NECESARIA PARA LA PREPARACION DE SU INFORME?

SE SUGIERE ACLARAR EL ALCANCE DE ESTA PREGUNTA.

6. ¿PODRIA LA COMISION ESPECIAL UTILIZAR CUALQUIER MEDIO APROPIADO PARA RECOGER, GRABAR O REPRODUCIR LA INFORMACION QUE CONSIDERE OPORTUNA?

SI.

7. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO A DAR LAS GARANTIAS Y FACILIDADES A QUE SE REFIEREN LAS LETRAS D), H) E I) DE LA RESOLUCION SOBRE OBSERVACIONES "IN LOCO" ADOPTADA POR LA COMISION, CUYO TEXTO SE ENVIA ANEXO A LA PRESENTE COMUNICACION?

6. BIGNONE CONCUDED BY SAYING HE HOPED USG COULD EXERT SOME INFLUENCE ON IAHRG EMPHASIZING FLEXIBILITY AND LESS RIGIDITY IN THEIR DEMANDS. I REMINDED HIM POSSIBLE IAHRG VISIT WAS STRICTLY A BILATERAL ISSUE. HE SMILED SAYING USG HAD INFLUENCE EVERYWHERE.

7. I THEN ASKED BIGNONE ABOUT THE NEXT STEP. HE STATED TENTATIVE ANSWERS WOULD GO TO FONOFF FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. FONOFF IN TURN WOULD CONTACT IAHRG. I AGAIN REMINDED BIGNONE OF FONOFF'S HARDLINE ATTITUDE AND NEGATIVE APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM. I SUGGESTED INASMUCH AS TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE IT WOULD REQUIRE SOME PUSH FROM PRESIDENT VIDELA TO GET FONOFF TO MOVE. HE PROMISED ME VIDELA WOULD DO SOME PUSHING.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, VISITS, COMMISSIONS, PROGRESS REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUENOS05645
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780300-0992
Format: TEL
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780735/aaaabdbj.tel
Line Count: 199
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 53f5146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1930270
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS: POSSIBLE IAHRC VISIT TO ARGENTINA
TAGS: SHUM, AR, IAHRC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/53f5146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014